

STATE OF THE CITY

GOOD MORNING EVERYONE. WELCOME TO MY, WOULD YOU BELIEVE, FIFTH
STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS.

LET ME BEGIN BY THANKING OUR POLICE FOR PRESENTING THE COLORS AND
TO RELANA HARRIS FOR THAT STIRRING RENDITION OF OUR NATIONAL
ANTHEM.

THE STATE OF THE CITY IS TO REPORT ON JUST THAT...THE STATE OF MIAMI
BEACH. IT'S FISCAL WELL BEING AND HOW WE AS A MUNICIPAL
GOVERNMENT HAVE TACKLED KEY ISSUES DURING THE PAST YEAR AND A
REVIEW OF SOME OF THE CHALLENGES THAT LIE AHEAD.

WHILE IT IS THE TASK AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE MAYOR TO PRESENT THE
STATE OF THE CITY; WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF THE COMMISSION,
ADMINISTRATION, AND LEGAL DEPARTMENT, THERE WOULD BE FAR LESS TO
REPORT.

THIS MORNING I'M PROUD TO SAY, PERHAPS EVEN MORE SO THAN IN THE
PRIOR FOUR ADDRESSES, THAT THERE'S SOME VERY POSITIVE AND

PROGRESSIVE PROGRAMS, PROPOSALS AND INITIATIVES TO TELL YOU ABOUT.

AND FOR THAT, I WOULD LIKE TO THANK MY COLLEAGUES: COMMISSIONERS MATTI BOWER, SIMON CRUZ, SAUL GROSS, LUIS GARCIA, RICHARD STEINBERG AND JERRY LIBBIN.

WHILE ALL ECONOMIC INDICATORS CONTINUE TO SHINE A BRIGHT LIGHT ON MIAMI BEACH, MANAGING SUCH A VIBRANT, DYNAMIC AND ONE OF THE MORE SUCCESSFUL CITIES SOUTH OF ATLANTA IS NO SMALL TASK. SO A SPECIAL THANKS AND CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR FINE CITY MANAGER, JORGE GONZALEZ, TO HIS ENTIRE STAFF AND OF COURSE OUR LEGAL DEPARTMENT WITH NEW CHIEF CITY ATTORNEY JOSE SMITH.

BEFORE I TELL YOU HOW PLEASED AND FORTUNATE WE ARE TO HAVE JOSE BACK ON THE DAIS, LET ME TAKE A MOMENT ON BEHALF OF MY COLLEAGUES AND THE ENTIRE CITY, TO THANK MURRAY DUBBIN FOR HIS MANY YEARS OF STELLAR SERVICE.

BUT IT'S A NEW DAY AND HOW MUCH BETTER CAN IT BE TO HAVE JOSE SMITH AS OUR NEW ATTORNEY? I CAN THINK OF NO ONE MORE ABLE AND QUALIFIED TO SIT IN THE FIRST CHAIR.

IN FACT, DURING HIS TENURE ON THE COMMISSION, JOSE BUILT QUITE A REPUTATION FOR REVIEWING CONTRACTS. JOSE HAS ALSO BEEN QUITE VIGOROUS IN PROTECTING THE PUBLIC INTEREST.

THERE'S ALSO SOMETHING ABOUT JOSE THAT NOT EVERYONE MAY KNOW. YOU SEE, JOSE WAS A PRETTY GOOD BASEBALL PLAYER AND ONE HECKUVA PITCHER FOR MIAMI BEACH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL.

HIS BASEBALL CAREER BEGAN A BIT EARLIER. SOON AFTER HE ARRIVED FROM CUBA IN 1961, HE STARTED PITCHING IN THE MIAMI BEACH LITTLE LEAGUE. I HAVE A LITTLE SOMETHING FOR YOU, JOSE, SORT OF A MOMENTO TO HANG IN YOUR NEW OFFICE.

IT'S A PHOTO OF YOU IN YOUR FIRST MIAMI BEACH LITTLE LEAGUE GAME. THE PLAQUE UNDER THE PHOTO READS: "CHIEF CITY ATTORNEY JOSE SMITH: AT BAT FOR MIAMI BEACH"

WELL, SO FAR, WE SEEM TO BE DOING OKAY. AND IF YOU LOOK AT THE PAST FIVE YEARS, IF A CITY'S SUCCESS CAN BE MEASURED BY ITS FISCAL STABILITY AND GROWTH, THEN MIAMI BEACH IS DOING JUST *SLIGHTLY* BETTER THAN GREAT.

TOURISM REMAINS ONE OF THE SHORING PILLARS OF OUR ECONOMIC FOUNDATION. RESORT TAX COLLECTIONS INCREASED 27.6 PERCENT BETWEEN 2000 AND THIS PAST YEAR.

WE COLLECTED FOR THE YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 2005 OVER 32.5 MILLION DOLLARS IN TOURIST AND RESORT TAX REVENUES.

EVERY YEAR WE HAVE BROKEN THE PRIOR YEAR'S RECORD FOR RESORT TAX COLLECTIONS. THAT'S THE MARK OF A POPULAR AND SUCCESSFUL CITY, AND NOT JUST WITH VISITORS.

WHILE THERE WERE AN IMPRESSIVE 8 MILLION OVERNIGHT STAYS IN SOUTH BEACH ALONE, A 9.5% INCREASE FROM THE YEAR BEFORE, THERE'S ALSO A

GROWING NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO WANT TO LIVE HERE.

AS ONE OF THE MORE ATTRACTIVE AND DESIRABLE SEASIDE RESIDENTIAL AND RESORT COMMUNITIES IN THE COUNTRY, REAL ESTATE AND DEVELOPMENT HAVE NOW PILLARED ALONGSIDE TOURISM TO FURTHER SHORE UP THE FOUNDATION OF OUR ECONOMY.

SUCCESS BRINGS CHALLENGES AS WELL AS OPPORTUNITIES. WITH PROPERTY VALUES UP, ALONG WITH UNPRECEDENTED INTEREST TO DEVELOP OR EXPAND NEW AND EXISTING PROPERTIES, WE NEEDED TO SET IN PLACE ADDITIONAL SAFEGUARDS AND GUIDELINES TO PROTECT OUR HISTORIC STRUCTURES.

AT THE 2004 STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS, I ANNOUNCED THE CREATION OF A MAYOR'S BLUE RIBBON PANEL TO CONFRONT, HEAD ON, SOME VERY COMPLEX HISTORIC PRESERVATION, STRUCTURAL, AND DEMOLITION ISSUES. THE PANEL WAS CREATED AFTER THE PRESERVATION COMMUNITY RALLIED AGAINST SOME QUESTIONABLE EMERGENCY DEMOLITION ORDERS. AFTER MEETING FOR ABOUT A YEAR, THE PANEL INTRODUCED TWO LEGISLATIVE MEASURES. THE FIRST: A RECONSTRUCTION ORDINANCE TO BETTER PROTECT CONTRIBUTING

BUILDINGS IN THE HISTORIC DISTRICT. THE SECOND: A DEMOLITION ORDINANCE TO OUTLINE THE PROCEDURES FOR NON-DESIGNATED STRUCTURES.

I AM PROUD TO ANNOUNCE THAT BOTH ORDINANCES WERE RECENTLY PUT INTO LAW, AND I WANT TO THANK THE BLUE RIBBON PANEL, PLANNING DEPARTMENT, LAND USE BOARDS, CITY ADMINISTRATION, LEGAL, AND OF COURSE, THE FINAL DECISION-MAKERS, THIS COMMISSION, FOR SUPPORTING THIS IMPORTANT AND PROTECTIVE LEGISLATION.

ALONG WITH THAT SUCCESSFUL LEGISLATION, I'M EXTREMELY PROUD TO REPORT THAT JUST ABOUT EVERY INITIATIVE THAT'S BEEN INTRODUCED AT THE FOUR PRIOR STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESSES HAS REACHED FRUITION.

ONE INITIATIVE IN PARTICULAR, INTRODUCED LAST YEAR, HAS NOW BEEN PUT INTO LAW AS GROUNDBREAKING LEGISLATION TO ADD ANOTHER LAYER OF PROTECTION AROUND OUR CHILDREN.

GENERATED RIGHT HERE IN MIAMI BEACH, VARIATIONS OF THIS LAW HAVE BEEN IMPLEMENTED IN NUMEROUS

CITIES AND COUNTIES THROUGHOUT FLORIDA AND ACROSS THE COUNTRY. THE LAW, WHICH FURTHER SEPARATES CONVICTED SEXUAL PREDATORS FROM WHERE CHILDREN GATHER TO LEARN AND PLAY, WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THIS COMMISSION.

I TRULY BELIEVE THAT THE RESULT OF OUR CAREFULLY CRAFTED LEGISLATION WILL BETTER PROTECT OUR CHILDREN FROM THE MOST HEINOUS CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR.

WHAT CAN BE MORE IMPORTANT THAN DOING EVERYTHING IN OUR POWER TO BETTER PROTECT OUR MOST VALUABLE AND VULNERABLE RESIDENTS? FROM THIS MAYOR'S PERSPECTIVE, THERE IS NOTHING THAT WE CAN FACE AS A MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT THAT RISES TO THAT LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE.

FOR SEVERAL YEARS NOW, THE HEALTH, WELFARE, SAFETY, RECREATIONAL, AND EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF OUR CHILDREN HAVE BEEN AT THE FOREFRONT OF THIS GOVERNMENT'S AGENDA.

WHEN THIS COMMISSION LEARNED JUST HOW FISCALLY SOLID THE CITY WAS, IT TOOK MATTI BOWER ABOUT

THIRTY SECONDS TO PROPOSE THE REMOVAL OF FEES FROM OUR NUMEROUS RECREATIONAL FACILITIES TO BENEFIT CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.

IF WE ARE DOING SO WELL AS A CITY, SAID MATTI, THEN LET'S PASS THAT ON TO THE KIDS. THE COMMISSION AGREED UNANIMOUSLY. I'M QUITE CERTAIN THAT MATTI WOULD FIND AN EQUALLY AGREEABLE CONSENSUS AMONG THE GROWING FAMILIES THROUGHOUT MIAMI BEACH.

BUT THAT'S MATTI. SHE HAS BEEN - AND *CONTINUES* TO BE - A STRONG ADVOCATE FOR FAMILIES. AND DURING THE PAST YEAR SHE HAS PLACED AT THE TOP OF HER AGENDA ONE OF MIAMI BEACH'S GREATEST CHALLENGES: PROVIDING MORE AFFORDABLE WORKFORCE HOUSING.

THANK YOU MATTI FOR ALL OF YOUR HARD WORK AND ALSO FOR KEEPING THIS GOVERNMENT'S FEET TO THE FIRE WITH THIS PRESSING ISSUE. I THINK YOU'LL BE VERY PLEASED WITH A PROPOSAL THAT WILL BE INTRODUCED A LITTLE LATER ON.

ANOTHER INITIATIVE FROM LAST YEAR'S STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS CREATED A NEW AND DIFFERENT WAY

OF LOOKING AT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND RESIDENTS. SIMPLY PUT, IF WE ARE DOING SO WELL AS A CITY, THEN LET'S SHARE IN THAT FISCAL SUCCESS BY GIVING SOME OF THOSE TAX DOLLARS BACK TO OUR RESIDENTS.

WELL, THE CHECKS HAVE BEEN SENT OUT, AND MORE THAN SIXTEEN THOUSAND RESIDENTS HAVE NOW RECEIVED A \$200 CHECK. THE MANAGER, FINANCE AND LEGAL DEPARTMENTS, AND THIS COMMISSION WERE ALL VERY SUPPORTIVE OF THIS PROGRESSIVE MEASURE. SO GO CASH THE CHECK AND SPEND IT ANY WAY YOU WANT.

AND WITH THE WAY THINGS ARE LOOKING FOR THE COMING YEAR, AT THE NEXT GO-AROUND, THIS MAYOR AND THIS COMMISSION SHOULD BE SENDING YOU AN EVEN BIGGER CHECK.

IT'S NOW BECOME A TRADITION WITHIN THE STATE OF THE CITY TO HONOR AND RECOGNIZE DESERVING INDIVIDUALS FROM EACH OF OUR THREE AREAS OF PUBLIC SAFETY: POLICE, FIRE AND OCEAN RESCUE.

ALL OF THESE DEPARTMENTS HAVE HAD OUTSTANDING YEARS: CRIME IS DOWN, FIRES ARE DOWN AND

RESCUES ARE UP. OUR CITY'S SUCCESS HAS ALSO BROUGHT SOME CHALLENGES FOR OUR PUBLIC SAFETY PROFESSIONALS, AND THEIR PERFORMANCE AND STATS FOR 2005 HAVE PROVEN THAT THOSE CHALLENGES HAVE BEEN MET WITH GREAT SUCCESS.

RATHER THAN GO THROUGH ALL THE NUMBERS THAT WILL SHOW WHY WE ARE SECOND TO NONE, LET'S HONOR A FEW INDIVIDUALS FROM POLICE, FIRE AND OCEAN RESCUE WHO HAVE GONE A NOTCH ABOVE AND BEYOND.

FROM POLICE: DETECTIVE GUS SANCHEZ, PLEASE RISE.

DETECTIVE SANCHEZ IS A NINETEEN YEAR VETERAN OF THE FORCE AND IS THE PROUD RECIPIENT OF THE MIAMI-DADE COUNTY ASSOCIATION CHIEFS OF POLICE 'OFFICER OF THE YEAR AWARD' FOR 2005.

WHILE THIS PRESTIGIOUS AWARD WAS GIVEN TO DETECTIVE SANCHEZ BECAUSE OF HIS HEROIC EFFORTS, WHICH LED TO THE LIFE-SAVING RESCUE OF A RUSSIAN EXCHANGE STUDENT, GUS IS BEING HONORED HERE TODAY AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF A GREAT POLICE DEPARTMENT, FROM ITS TOP BRASS TO RANK AND FILE. YOU DO THE DEPARTMENT AND THIS CITY PROUD, DETECTIVE. CONGRATULATIONS.

FIREFIGHTERS CHISOLM, ROBINETTE AND VOSS, PLEASE RISE. THESE SUPERB FIREFIGHTERS HAVE RECEIVED UNIT CITATIONS AND ARE BEING RECOGNIZED TODAY FOR SAVING THE LIVES OF A MOTHER AND HER NEWBORN BABY. YOUR TRAINING AND EXCELLENT CARE IN A POTENTIALLY GRAVE SITUATION SAVED TWO LIVES. MOTHER AND BABY WERE STABILIZED AND ARE NOW IN GOOD HEALTH. THANK YOU FOR YOUR VIGILANCE AND QUICK RESPONSE.

LIFEGUARDS AGUILAR, CANELLAS, DE OLAZARRA, MAYOR, MCMANUS AND RODRIGUEZ, PLEASE RISE. THESE OCEAN RESCUE MEMBERS HAVE RECEIVED LETTERS OF COMMENDATION AND ARE BEING RECOGNIZED TODAY FOR LIFESAVING ACTION WHILE ATTENDING A TOURNAMENT IN BREVARD COUNTY.

BECAUSE OF YOUR EXPERIENCE AND AWARENESS, YOU WERE ABLE TO SAVE A GROUP OF SWIMMERS IN DISTRESS IN HEAVY SWELLS, AS WELL AS SOME WOULD-BE CIVILIAN RESCUERS.

CONGRATULATIONS, LIFEGUARDS. YOU ARE REPRESENTATIVES OF A GREAT DEPARTMENT.

ALSO, THANKS FOR ONCE AGAIN COMPETING IN THE MAYOR'S CHARITY BOXING EVENT, 'RESCUERS IN THE RING', AND THANKS TO TREVOR CEDAR AND SOUTH FLORIDA BOXING. GREAT JOB AND ALL ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO NEXT YEAR'S MATCHES.

WHEN YOU LOOK AT HOW THE CITY IS PERFORMING, WE CAN APPLAUD NEARLY EVERY DEPARTMENT AND, MR. MANAGER, IT IS BECAUSE OF YOUR EXTRAORDINARY PROFESSIONALISM AND DAY-TO-DAY MANAGEMENT OF THE CITY, THAT I CAN ACTUALLY STAND HERE AS MAYOR AND TAKE THE CREDIT. I THANK YOU FOR THAT.

BUT LET'S ALL SHARE IN THE CREDIT FOR *THIS* ONE: BACK SEVERAL MONTHS AGO, THE COMMISSION AUTHORIZED THE ADMINISTRATION TO MOVE FORWARD WITH A COMPETITIVE PILOT PROGRAM TO OFFER FREE WIRELESS INTERNET SERVICE WITHIN SOME HIGH DENSITY AND TOURISM CORRIDORS. THE PROGRAM WAS A SUCCESS AND THE COMMISSION LAST MONTH AUTHORIZED THE ADMINISTRATION

TO NEGOTIATE A CONTRACT WITH IBM TO INSTALL A WIRELESS INTERNET NETWORK THAT WILL BE AVAILABLE CITYWIDE LATER THIS SUMMER.

IT'S A WONDERFUL AND EXCITING AMENITY FOR BOTH RESIDENTS AND VISITORS AND ONCE AGAIN MIAMI BEACH IS LEADING THE WAY WITH INNOVATIVE AND PROGRESSIVE PROGRAMS AND IDEAS.

WE ALSO CONCLUDED OUR TRANSACTION WITH THE MIAMI CITY BALLET, WHICH WILL HELP TO SUSTAIN THIS WONDERFUL AND WORLD RENOWNED CULTURAL INSTITUTION AND LEARNING FACILITY.

WE ARE ALSO MOVING FORWARD WITH THE EXPANSION OF THE NEW WORLD SYMPHONY, AND IMPROVEMENTS TO BOTH THE BYRON CARLYLE AND COLONY THEATERS HAVE BEEN COMPLETED, ADDING TWO MORE VENUES AND DIMENSIONS TO OUR EVER EXPANDING AND DIVERSE CULTURAL ACTIVITIES. AS A COMMUNITY, WE HAVE PLACED OURSELVES AT THE FOREFRONT OF ART AND CULTURE. ART BASEL MIAMI BEACH HAS BROUGHT US TO A NEW LEVEL ON THE WORLD STAGE, AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO THE NEXT ART BASEL MIAMI BEACH COMING UP IN DECEMBER.

AS WE CONTINUE TO DEVELOP AND NURTURE MIAMI BEACH AS A CULTURAL FOCAL POINT, I WOULD LIKE TO PRESENT AN EXCITING INITIATIVE FOR THE COMING YEAR: THE CREATION OF A CULTURAL ARTS OVERLAY DISTRICT.

THE PROPOSED DISTRICT WOULD RUN FROM 23RD STREET AND DADE BOULEVARD TO THE NORTH, LINCOLN ROAD TO THE SOUTH, MERIDIAN AVENUE TO THE WEST, AND THE OCEAN TO THE EAST.

WITHIN THESE BOUNDARIES WE HAVE THE BASS MUSEUM, THE NEW REGIONAL LIBRARY, THE BALLET, THE LITTLE STAGE THEATER, THE MIAMI BEACH CHESS CENTER, THE HISTORIC CARL FISHER CLUBHOUSE, COLLINS PARK, THE GARDEN CENTER, THE LINCOLN THEATER AND EXPANSION OF THE NEW WORLD SYMPHONY WITH THE SOUNDSPACE PROJECT AND ADJACENT PARK; AND OF COURSE, THE JACKIE GLEASON THEATER, WHICH MAY BE MOVING INTO A NEW USE AS WE CONTINUE OUR NEGOTIATIONS WITH CIRQUE DU SOLEIL.

WHAT'S THE PURPOSE OF AN OVERLAY DISTRICT?

GOOD QUESTION. WELL, THE ACTUAL DESIGN OF A CULTURAL ARTS OVERLAY DISTRICT WOULD BECOME THE ATTRACTION AND INCENTIVE FOR ARTS RELATED BUSINESSES AND ACTIVITIES TO REVITALIZE THE AREA OF DESIGNATION. NEIGHBORHOOD GUIDELINES AND A MARKETING PLAN WOULD BE DEVELOPED TO ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT AN ARTS THEME AND RELATED USES. THE OVERLAY DISTRICT WOULD BECOME THE CATALYST TO ENCOURAGE CONNECTIVITY OF ALL OF THE CULTURAL ASSETS WITHIN ITS BOUNDARIES.

THE CITY IS ALREADY PLANNING TO RESTORE AND REVITALIZE ADDITIONAL CULTURAL ASSETS WITHIN THESE BOUNDARIES, BUT THE CREATION OF A CULTURAL ARTS OVERLAY DISTRICT WOULD PROVIDE SOME ADDITIONAL BENEFITS, GUIDELINES AND INCENTIVES.

AT THE NEXT COMMISSION MEETING, I WILL BE ASKING THE COMMISSION TO DIRECT THE ADMINISTRATION AND PLANNING DEPARTMENT TO EXPLORE AND CONSIDER ALL ASPECTS AND COMPONENTS OF DESIGNATING A CULTURAL ARTS OVERLAY DISTRICT.

IF THE MECHANICS OF THE DISTRICT CAN BE SET IN PLACE, WE'LL BRING TOGETHER THE STAKEHOLDERS, BUSINESS AND PROPERTY OWNERS AND, OF COURSE THE PUBLIC, FOR A SERIES OF CHARRETTES. I ALSO PLAN TO CREATE A TASK FORCE TO HELP GUIDE THE PROCESS ALONG.

MAYBE WE CAN ALSO FIGURE OUT A WAY TO INCLUDE THE BYRON-CARLYLE AND A FEW OTHERS. HOW DOES THAT SOUND? ARE WE ALL RIGHT WITH THIS INITIATIVE?

AS WE CONTINUE TO MOVE THIS CITY FORWARD, THERE'S ALREADY MUCH TO TOUT AND TO BE PROUD OF. AS A POINT OF PERSONAL AS WELL AS POLITICAL PRIDE FOR THIS MAYOR, LET ME SPEAK TO THE GREAT STRIDES WE'VE MADE TO PROVIDE OPEN PUBLIC ACCESS ALONG OUR SHORELINE.

WITH THE SUPPORT OF THIS COMMISSION AND THIS ADMINISTRATION, WE HAVE NEW AND QUITE SPECTACULAR BEACHWALKS AND BAYWALKS - WHAT MANY ARE CALLING THE NEW POST CARD SETTINGS FOR MIAMI BEACH. AND THANKS TO A PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP, WE'LL SOON HAVE A BRAND NEW SOUTH POINTE PARK. WITH ITS NATURAL LOCATION, ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY DESIGN,

AND PERHAPS EVEN AN ICEBERG SCULPTURE TO STARTLE THE PASSING CRUISE SHIP PASSENGERS. SOUTH POINTE PARK IS WELL ON ITS WAY TO BECOMING ONE OF FLORIDA'S SIGNATURE PUBLIC OPEN SPACES.

AND HOW PROUD WE CAN BE OF THE OPEN SPACE PROGRAM IN NORTH BEACH, FROM NORTH SHORE AND ALTOS DEL MAR PARK, TO THE NEW BEACHWALK, THE NORTH END OF MIAMI BEACH HAS BECOME A WONDERFUL BALANCE OF GOOD DEVELOPMENT AND VERY GENEROUS AND ENVIRONMENTALLY-ORIENTED GREEN SPACE.

IT REALLY HAS BEEN A PROSPEROUS AND, IN FACT, QUITE A SPARKLING PUBLIC RELATIONS YEAR FOR MIAMI BEACH. HOLLYWOOD FOUND US AGAIN, AND GREATER MIAMI BEACH HAS MOVED UPWARD IN THE RANKINGS TO BECOME ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR REGIONS IN THE COUNTRY TO MAKE MOVIES.

OUR GROWTH IN THE FILM INDUSTRY HAS BEEN SPURRED ON BY THE NEW INTERNET-BASED ONE-STOP PERMITTING PROCESS IMPLEMENTED IN 2005 TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR FILM COMPANIES AND CREWS TO NAVIGATE THE RED TAPE.

LAST YEAR, OUR REGIONAL STATS WERE QUITE IMPRESSIVE. WE HOSTED MORE THAN TWO THOUSAND FILM, TELEVISION, MUSIC VIDEO, COMMERCIAL AND STILL PHOTO SHOOTS, ESTIMATED TO HAVE BROUGHT APPROXIMATELY ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY MILLION DOLLARS INTO THE ECONOMY.

WE HAD ANOTHER PRIME TIME SERIES CALLED SOUTH BEACH AND, YES, REALITY TELEVISION ALSO DISCOVERED US. WE HAVE A NEW SERIES CALLED 8TH AND OCEAN, ANOTHER THAT FOLLOWS AROUND OUR BEACH PATROL, AND ONE OF THE BIGGER HITS OF THE CURRENT SEASON CALLED, MIAMI INK.

THIS SHOW GIVES US A VERY FASCINATING PEEK INSIDE THE DRAMA OF A TATTOO PARLOR LOCATED ON WASHINGTON AVENUE. LET'S WELCOME TO CITY HALL FROM *ORIGINAL MEDIA* THE PRODUCERS OF MIAMI INK:

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS CLARA MARKOWITZ AND CHARLIE CORWIN

SUPERVISING PRODUCER ISAAC BOLDEN

AND *PRODUCERS* DAVID ROMA AND TOMMY FWAUHAUS

IT HAS BEEN A VERY GOOD YEAR FOR MIAMI BEACH. WE HOSTED SUCH LUMINARIES AS PRESIDENT GEORGE BUSH, DAME EDNA, HILLARY CLINTON, JOAN RIVERS, JOHN MCCAIN, BOW WOW AND JACKIE MASON.

AND WHAT CITY ANYWHERE CAN BOAST THE HOSTING OF BOTH THE WINE AND FOOD FESTIVAL AND ART DECO WEEKEND, TWO EVENTS THAT RUN THE CULINARY MARATHON FROM CHAMPAGNE AND CAVIER TO KOOL AID AND CORN DOGS.

BUT ISN'T THAT WHAT MIAMI BEACH IS REALLY ALL ABOUT? WE CELEBRATE BLACK, HISPANIC, JEWISH, IRISH, ITALIAN, BRAZILIAN...WELL, JUST ABOUT EVERYBODY'S HISTORY AND HERITAGE.

WE CELEBRATE ARCHITECTURE, FASHION, GAY PRIDE AND EVERY NOW AND THEN A FEW HUNDRED FOLKS WILL EVEN DRUM AND DANCE TO THE MAGIC OF THE FULL MOON AT THE WATER'S EDGE.

WHICH IS THE PERFECT SEGUE TO LUIS GARCIA. NOT NECESSARILY DANCING TO THE FULL MOON, MIND YOU, BUT LUIS DID SPONSOR SOME IMPORTANT LEGISLATION RELATING TO GAY

RIGHTS AND COMMISSIONER YOU DESERVE A HAND FOR THAT.

LUIS HAS ALSO BEEN THERE FROM THE BEGINNING WITH THE NEW FIRE HOUSES, FROM CONCEPT, TO CONSTRUCTION AND SOON TO COMPLETION. WHILE THE ENTIRE COMMISSION WILL ALSO BE THERE FOR THE GRAND OPENING AND RIBBON CUTTING, IT WOULD BE MOST APPROPRIATE FOR LUIS TO BE THE ONE TO HOLD THAT JUMBO SCISSORS.

LUIS IS ALSO CO-CHAIRING ALONG WITH MATTI, A NEW CONDO REFORM TASK FORCE, WHICH HAS DELVED INTO A BUCKET OF IMPORTANT AND PRESSING ISSUES FACING A VERY LARGE POPULATION OF RESIDENTS.

IT SHOULD BE INTERESTING AND QUITE ENLIGHTENING TO SEE WHAT IDEAS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ARE BROUGHT FORWARD FROM THE WORK OF THE TASK FORCE.

THANKS LOU, AND YOU TOO MATTI, FOR TAKING ON SUCH A CHALLENGE. AND LOU, I BELIEVE I CAN SPEAK FOR EVERYONE AT THE DAIS IN WISHING YOU THE BEST OF LUCK WITH YOUR QUEST FOR A SEAT IN TALLAHASSEE.

AND IF YOU DO WIN THE SEAT, LOU, MAYBE YOU CAN TURN AROUND THE LEGISLATURE TO REMOVE FLORIDA FROM BEING THE ONLY STATE IN THE COUNTRY THAT EXPLICITLY BANS QUALIFIED GAY MEN AND WOMEN FROM ADOPTING. WILL YOU DO IT?

LET'S STAY AT THE DAIS. WHEN SIMON CRUZ, JOSE SMITH AND I WERE FIRST ELECTED BACK IN 1997, MIAMI BEACH WAS A DIFFERENT PLACE. WE INHERITED SOME VERY DIFFICULT LEGAL ISSUES, FROM UNSETTLED DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS SOUTH OF FIFTH STREET TO SAVING A BEACHFRONT PARK FROM UNDUE DEVELOPMENT IN THE ALTOS DEL MAR SECTION OF NORTH BEACH.

WE'VE ACTUALLY MADE OUR WAY SUCCESSFULLY THROUGH MOST OF IT AND WHEN YOU SHAKE IT ALL OUT, THE END RESULTS WILL CARRY A LEGACY THAT WILL BENEFIT RESIDENTS AND VISITORS FOR MANY GENERATIONS TO COME.

FOR NEARLY A DECADE, SIMON AND I HAVE SAT AT THE DAIS TOGETHER. IT'S BEEN A DECADE WHERE SIMON HAS GREATLY IMPROVED HIS GOLF GAME AND I'VE SPENT A LITTLE TOO MUCH TIME

TRAVELING THAT CULINARY MARATHON.

BUT WE ARE BOTH STILL AT THE DAIS AND HOPEFULLY OUR COLLEAGEALITY WILL EXTEND RIGHT THROUGH TO MY SIXTH STATE OF THE CITY ABOUT A YEAR FROM NOW. I THINK IT WILL.

WE HAVE GONE THROUGH A LOT, SIMON, AND I DO BELIEVE WE BOTH HAVE A LOT TO BE PROUD OF. OUR PHILISOPHICAL BALANCE AT THE DAIS WILL LEAVE US BOTH WITH A CITY IN MUCH BETTER SHAPE THAN WHEN WE WERE FIRST ELECTED. I THINK YOU WOULD AGREE.

AND TO THE OTHER END OF THE SPECTRUM, WE HAVE THE NEWEST MEMBER OF THE COMMISSION, JERRY LIBBIN. THOUGH RECENTLY ELECTED, JERRY IS A VETERAN ACTIVIST AND FREQUENT SPEAKER DURING THOSE QUITE ENLIGHTENING COMMISSION FLASHBACKS REPLAYED ON OUR GOVERNMENT CHANNEL 77.

IT'S INTERESTING HOW SO MANY OF THE ISSUES THAT WERE DISCUSSED AND DEBATED BACK A DOZEN YEARS AGO ARE STILL WITH US TODAY. THEY JUST RETURN WITH DIFFERENT FACES.

BESIDES THOSE 90'S HAIR STYLES AND FASHION FLASHBACKS, JERRY NOW BRINGS TO THE COMMISSION A WEALTH OF EXPERIENCE FROM SERVICE ON SEVERAL BOARDS AND ORGANIZATIONS.

JERRY WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN THE CITY'S ACQUISITION AND RENOVATION OF THE BYRON-CARLYLE AND, SINCE BEING ON THE COMMISSION, JERRY HAS REQUESTED THAT WE TAKE A LOOK AT THE MOST CROWDED PORTIONS OF OUR BEACH FOR THE POSSIBILITY OF ADDITIONAL LIFEGUARD STANDS.

JERRY IS ALSO WORKING TO ESTABLISH A SISTER CITY WITH CHINA WITH THE IDEA OF DEVELOPING INBOUND CULTURAL TOURISM. FINALLY, JERRY IS ALSO EXPLORING A METHODOLOGY THAT WILL ALLOW SOME PORTABILITY OF THE HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION WHEN OWNERS SELL AND THEN BUY A NEW HOME.

A FEW MINUTES AGO, I MENTIONED HOW SOME ISSUES JUST KEEP COMING BACK.

ONE THAT HAS KEPT US UP, MAY HAVE FINALLY BEEN PUT TO BED OR

PERHAPS UNDER THE PILLOW THIS YEAR: THE NOISE ORDINANCE.

FOR MANY RESIDENTS, IT WAS A VERY IMPORTANT QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUE THAT HAD BEEN CREATED MORE BY THIS CITY'S EXTRAORDINARY SUCCESS THAN BY ANYTHING ELSE.

IN A NUTSHELL: WE HAVE A VERY VIBRANT NIGHTLIFE AND BUSINESS COMMUNITY. WE ALSO HAVE A JUST AS VIBRANT RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY. LEADERS OF BOTH THOSE COMMUNITIES MET FOR ABOUT A YEAR TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO...WELL, LOWER THE NOISE.

LAST MONTH, THIS COMMISSION LISTENED TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS ISSUED AFTER A YEAR OF MEETINGS, AND A NEW NOISE ORDINANCE IS NOW THE LAW.

THE NEW LAW BRINGS STRONGER ENFORCEMENT AND A MUCH NEEDED TRACKING SYSTEM. ACCORDING TO INITIAL REPORTS, THE NEW ORDINANCE IS ACCOMPLISHING WHAT WE INTENDED. AND THAT'S A GOOD THING.

LET'S TAKE A MOMENT TO ENTER THE MAYORAL WORLD OF *VISION* AND *LEGACY*, THE TWO WORDS MOST

OFTEN ASSOCIATED WITH BEING A MAYOR, PARTICULARLY DURING THE STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS.

THE *VISION*, OF COURSE, IS WHILE YOU ARE THE MAYOR; AND THE *LEGACY*, WELL, THAT'S WHAT IS REMEMBERED ABOUT YOU AFTER YOUR TERM AS MAYOR HAS FINISHED.

WE'LL WAIT UNTIL NEXT YEAR FOR THE LEGACY, BUT LET ME TAKE JUST A MOMENT OR TWO TO DISCUSS THAT VISION THING AND HOW THIS MAYOR VIEWS SOME OF OUR MORE IMMEDIATE AND DOWN THE ROAD GOALS, OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES.

ALONG WITH THE POSSIBLE CREATION OF A CULTURAL ARTS OVERLAY DISTRICT, WE NEED TO FIGURE OUT HOW BEST TO SURVIVE OR AT LEAST TO GET THROUGH THE VERY AMBITIOUS \$620 MILLION IN PUBLIC WORK THAT HAS OR WILL SOON IMPACT ALMOST EVERY INCH OF MIAMI BEACH.

WE'RE ABOUT HALFWAY INTO THE PROGRAM, WHICH SHOULD BE SUBSTANTIALLY COMPLETED IN ANOTHER FIVE YEARS.

FOR THOSE OF US WHO HAVE BEEN AT THIS DAIS SINCE 1997, WE'VE SEEN MANY CHANGES. WE KNEW THAT WHEN WE EVENTUALLY LEFT OFFICE, MIAMI BEACH WOULD BE A VERY DIFFERENT CITY THAN WHEN WE WERE FIRST ELECTED.

THAT'S CERTAINLY A VISION WE ALL SHARED.

IT WAS ALSO A DIFFICULT ONE. IT WOULD SET US ON A PATH TO TACKLE AND PERHAPS EVEN GRAPPLE WITH NUMEROUS INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS, MANY IMPACTING OUR RIGHT OF WAY AND ABILITY TO GET AROUND.

WE WOULD FACE BRIDGE AND ROAD REPAIRS, IMPROVEMENTS TO NEW PARKS, STREETSCAPES AND FIRE HOUSES, FROM OLD CITY HALLS TO SEA WALLS AND, ONE OF GOVERNMENT'S GREATEST CHALLENGES: COMING UP WITH DESIGN-PLEASING AND FRIENDLY PUBLIC RESTROOM FACILITIES.

LET ME STOP HERE FOR JUST A MINUTE TO GLOAT ABOUT ONE PARTICULAR BEACHFRONT RESTROOM. AS PART OF THE JUST COMPLETED LUMMUS PARK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, WE NOW HAVE ONE OF THE NICEST NEW ART DECO-STYLED PUBLIC RESTROOMS IN ALL OF

FLORIDA LOCATED AT 14TH STREET AND OCEAN DRIVE.

WE KNOW WHAT A GREAT JOB THE CITY'S CIP OFFICE, F& L CONSTRUCTION,
AND ALL OF OUR DESIGNERS AND CONTRACTORS DID WITH THIS PROJECT.
BUT IT ALSO TOOK A LOT OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

LET ME RECOGNIZE ONE MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC, A RESIDENT WHO SAT ON
THE BEACH PRESERVATION BOARD AND NOW SITS ON THE SAFETY
COMMITTEE, WHO REALLY HELPED US WITH THE LOOK AND FEEL OF THE
NEW RESTROOM. LET'S GIVE A HAND TO JERRY MARSCH. THANKS JERRY.

MUCH OF WHAT WE SEE IN PUBLIC WORK ACTIVITY IS ABOVE GROUND.
WHAT WE CAN'T ALWAYS SEE IS THE REPAIR AND REPLACEMENT OF THE
LONG-NEGLECTED BELOW GROUND INFRASTRUCTURE. IT'S A DAUNTING AND
COSTLY TASK, BUT WE TOOK ON THE CHALLENGE AND WE ARE GETTING
THROUGH IT.

AND HOW SUCCESSFUL WE ARE MAY COME DOWN TO HOW WE CAN
CONTINUE TO MOVE TRAFFIC. WE WILL NEED THE COOPERATION OF THE
FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF

TRANSPORTATION AND SOME TOUGH DECISION-MAKING ON OUR PART AS WELL. I THINK WE ARE UP TO IT.

WHEN I APPOINTED RICHARD STEINBERG TO REPRESENT MIAMI BEACH ON THE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION, THE APPOINTMENT WAS BASED ON RICHARD'S EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE RELATING TO TRAFFIC, PARKING, AND TRANSPORTATION.

WHILE WE HAVE COME A LONG WAY IN IMPROVING OUR LOCAL BUS CIRCULATOR SYSTEM WITH A NEW SHUTTLE THAT'S TURNED OUT TO BE AN OVERWHELMING SUCCESS, WE STILL HAVE A LONG WAY TO GO TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO MOVE TOO MANY VEHICLES WITHIN A BUILT-OUT CITY WITH MANY NARROW STREETS AND ROADWAYS.

YOU KNOW, RICHARD ACTUALLY *ENJOYS* THIS SORT OF THING AND I COULDN'T THINK OF ANYONE WHO WOULD BE MORE WILLING AND DELIGHTED TO SIT ON THE MPO TO PONDER THESE COMPLEX ISSUES WITH OFFICIALS FROM THE COUNTY AND NEIGHBORING MUNICIPALITIES.

I SAW YOUR FIRST MPO MEETING, RICHARD, AND I WAS IMPRESSED AT HOW NICELY YOU FIT RIGHT IN. AND LET'S

NOT FORGET YOUR FINE WORK WITH THE LEAGUE OF CITIES.

RICHARD WAS ALSO AT THE FOREFRONT OF BRINGING TO MIAMI BEACH THE PREVIOUSLY MENTIONED WIRELESS INTERNET NETWORK, AND RICHARD IS AGAIN WORKING TIRELESSLY TO REGISTER NEW VOTERS.

THERE'S MUCH TO NOTE ABOUT RICHARD, BUT WHERE HE HAS TRULY SHINED HAS BEEN HIS DEDICATION TO BIG BROTHERS & BIG SISTERS, ONE OF THE FINEST ORGANIZATIONS THAT'S EVER BEEN CREATED TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF CHILDREN. I KNOW HOW IMPORTANT THAT IS TO YOU, RICHARD, AND FOR THAT I TIP MY HAT AND THANK YOU FOR CARING. LET'S ALL GIVE RICHARD A HAND.

CARING ABOUT OTHERS HAS LONG BEEN A DEFINING STATEMENT ABOUT MIAMI BEACH. NOT JUST WITHIN THIS GOVERNMENT AND ITS MANY NON-PROFIT PARTNERS, BUT ALSO AMONG MANY OF OUR FINE CORPORATE CITIZENS. WHILE MANY ARE DESERVING OF RECOGNITION, ONE WILL BE A RECIPIENT OF THAT HONOR TODAY.

AS WE ARE ALL TOO AWARE, THIS PAST YEAR'S HURRICANE SEASON WAS A VERY DIFFICULT ONE FOR SOUTH

FLORIDA. COMPARED TO OTHER PLACES, SUCH AS THE GULF COAST, WE WERE FORTUNATE, BUT STILL HEAVILY IMPACTED BY NATURE'S WRATH, MOST NOTABLY OF COURSE, HURRICANE WILMA.

MIAMI BEACH AND THE COUNTY WERE WELL PREPARED, AND I'M EXTREMELY PROUD OF HOW WE IMPLEMENTED OUR EMERGENCY OPERATION PLANS. THE MANAGER AND HIS STAFF, FIRE, POLICE, PARKING, PUBLIC WORKS, EVERYONE IN THE CITY PERFORMED ABOVE AND BEYOND.

BUT WE ALSO LEARNED FROM LAST YEAR'S STORMS: GOVERNMENT CAN'T DO IT ALONE. THEY NEED TO ENCOURAGE PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND AN INVOLVED PRIVATE SECTOR.

DURING THE IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH OF WILMA, WE WEREN'T ALONE. ONE CORPORATE CITIZEN FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR, PUBLIX SUPERMARKET, STEPPED UP TO THE PLATE AND DISTRIBUTED FREE WATER AND ICE FROM THE CONVENTION CENTER PARKING LOT. PUBLIX SUPERMARKET CAME THROUGH AND CAME THROUGH BIG.

WE HAVE WITH US FROM PUBLIX SUPERMARKETS REGIONAL DIRECTOR MIKE MERIDETH AND MEDIA AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS MANAGER ANN HENDRICKS. PLEASE STAND AND ALLOW US TO OFFER OUR APPRECIATION. LET'S GIVE THEM A HAND.

LISTEN, YOUR FRIED CHICKEN'S NOT BAD EITHER.

ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT MAYORAL DECISIONS IS TO APPOINT THE CHAIR OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE. WHEN COMMISSIONER SAUL GROSS AGREED TO ACCEPT THAT APPOINTMENT, IT WAS A GOOD DAY FOR OUR CITY. IT WAS ALSO A GOOD DAY FOR ME.

SAUL HAS FAR EXCEEDED ALL EXPECTATIONS AS A COMMON SENSE AND FISCALLY RESPONSIBLE COMMISSIONER, AND HIS YEARS OF EXPERIENCE AS A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSMAN HAVE TRULY BENEFITED THE CITY.

FROM THIS MAYOR'S PERSPECTIVE, SAUL HAS BEEN A TREMENDOUS ASSET TO THE COMMISSION. THANK YOU, SAUL, FOR ALL OF YOUR HARD WORK IN THE AREAS OF PRESERVATION AND SCALING DOWN EXCESSIVE

DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS. LET'S ALL GIVE SAUL A HAND.

LET ME NOW SPEAK TO ONE OF OUR TOUGHEST CHALLENGES: PROVIDING AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR OUR RESIDENTS AND WORKFORCE.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN MIAMI BEACH IS CHALLENGING FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS: LACK OF AVAILABLE LAND, HIGH REAL ESTATE PRICES, ESCALATING CONSTRUCTION COSTS, NOT-IN-MY-BACKYARD ATTITUDES, AND THE EXTREMELY HIGH DENSITY THAT ALREADY EXISTS IN THE CITY.

THE AREA OF GREATEST POTENTIAL FOR ADDRESSING OUR HOUSING ISSUES IS IN THE PRESERVATION OF OUR RENTAL APARTMENT BUILDINGS, WHETHER SUBSIDIZED OR NOT.

THE RENTAL APARTMENT INVENTORY IS, AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE OUR CITY'S PRIMARY SOURCE OF HOUSING FOR OUR WORKFORCE, BUT THIS INVENTORY IS UNDER INCREASING PRESSURES, MANY OF WHICH ARE BEYOND THE CITY'S DIRECT INFLUENCE.

MOM-AND-POP APARTMENT BUILDING OWNERS ARE GIVING IN TO THE FINANCIAL BENEFITS OF CONDOMINIUM CONVERSION OR ARE BEING PRESSURED TO SELL IN THE FACE INCREASING PROPERTY TAX ASSESMENTS. RENT RATES ARE RISING: MEDIAN RENT IN MIAMI BEACH IS NOW ABOVE \$1,000 PER MONTH.

THE RESULT? WELL, TO GIVE YOU A VERY REAL PERSPECTIVE, CURRENT ESTIMATES INDICATE THAT THERE MAY BE 22% PERCENT FEWER RENTAL UNITS IN MIAMI BEACH IN 2009 THAN THERE WERE IN 2000 – THAT TRANSLATES TO ABOUT 5,000 FEWER UNITS.

AS A CITY, WE NEED TO MEET THIS CHALLENGE: HOW DO WE DO THAT? FIRST, THIS COMMISSION, SHOULD ADDRESS THE ISSUE OF EXPIRING AFFORDABILITY PERIODS FOR PROPERTIES THAT WERE DEVELOPED THROUGH THE CITY'S AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAMS.

SECOND, AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, WE NEED TO ADDRESS THE UNDERLYING FISCAL AND ECONOMIC ISSUES THAT ARE IMPACTING INVENTORY AND COST, AND IDENTIFY TOOLS THAT CAN HELP PRESERVE THE RENTAL APARTMENT USE.

THE CITY COMMISSION HAS ALREADY APPROVED A RESOLUTION URGING THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE TO IMPLEMENT INCOME-BASED PROPERTY ASSESSMENT FOR THE TAXATION OF AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING.

BUT WE CAN TAKE IT FURTHER. I AM PROPOSING THAT THE LEGISLATURE CONSIDER THE CONCEPT OF AN AD VALOREM TAX DEFERRAL FOR THE OWNERS OF APARTMENT BUILDINGS WHO MEET CERTAIN RENTAL RATE THRESHOLDS AND PROPERTY MAINTENANCE STANDARDS, IN AN EFFORT TO ENCOURAGE THEIR RETENTION.

WHILE ASSESSED VALUES WILL SURELY CONTINUE TO RISE, I PROPOSE THAT THE TAXES DUE ON ANY INCREASES BE CAPPED AT 3%. THE BALANCE HELD ON THE PROPERTY WILL ONLY BE DUE UPON THE PROPERTY'S SALE OR CHANGE OF USE.

AT THE NEXT MEETING, I WILL BE ASKING THIS COMMISSION TO ENDORSE THE SUBMISSION OF THIS PROPOSAL TO THE LEGISLATURE AS A VITAL COMPONENT FOR THE RETENTION OF AFFORDABLE RENTAL BUILDINGS. IN FACT, INCOMING SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE, MARCO RUBIO, HAS CALLED

FOR SUCH INITIATIVES TO BE SUBMITTED.

IN RECENT YEARS, MIAMI BEACH HAS TAKEN THE LEAD IN A NUMBER OF INNOVATIVE AND PROGRESSIVE PROGRAMS AND IDEAS. I AM CONFIDENT THAT WITH THE SUPPORT OF THIS COMMISSION, WE CAN ONCE AGAIN BECOME LEADERS IN ADDRESSING THIS VERY PRESSING ISSUE TO RELIEVE SOME OF THE HOUSING PRESSURE ON OUR WORKFORCE.

WHILE AFFORDABILITY IN HOUSING HAS BECOME ONE OF THE GREATEST CHALLENGES IN SOUTH FLORIDA, MIAMI BEACH HAS NOT BEEN SITTING IDLE. WE HAVE THE MIAMI BEACH HOUSING AUTHORITY, WHICH MATTI WAS A LONGTIME MEMBER OF, AND IT'S A GROUP THAT SHOULD BE COMMENDED FOR ALL OF ITS HARD WORK.

AUTHORITY MEMBERS: BETTY GUTIERREZ, LEONARD TURKEL, MILLI MEMBIELA, STEVE CHAYKIN, AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MIGUEL DEL CAMPILLO, PLEASE RISE.

WE WILL BE CLOSING THE STATE OF THE CITY IN CELEBRATORY FASHION WITH THE MIAMI BEACH COMMUNITY

DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, THIS YEAR MARKING ITS 25TH ANNIVERSARY.
WITH THAT LANDMARK , I ASKED THE ORGANIZATION TO BE HERE TODAY TO
BE RECOGNIZED.

DO WE HAVE SOME MBCDC'ERS HERE?

LISTEN, TO BE ANYWHERE FOR 25 YEARS, PARTICULARLY IN A POLITICAL
SETTING, DESERVES SPECIAL RECOGNITION.

FOR THOSE WHO MAY NOT KNOW, MBCDC PROVIDES COMPREHENSIVE
HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS THAT AIM TO BALANCE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND URBAN DESIGN, ECONOMIC VITALITY AND
INCREASING JOB OPPORTUNITY, AND SUPPORT FOR A DIVERSE, ECLECTIC
AND SUCCESSFUL NEIGHBORHOOD SOCIAL FABRIC. DID I GET THAT RIGHT,
DENIS?

MBCDC HAS HELPED 280 FAMILIES TO BECOME FIRST-TIME HOME BUYERS
AND IS RECOGNIZED AS THE OUTSTANDING NONPROFIT PROVIDER OF
HOMEOWNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES IN THE REGION.

MBCDC HAS LED THE WAY FOR MANY YEARS WITH ITS NUMEROUS PROGRAMS
PROVIDING COMPREHENSIVE HOUSING

SERVICES TO A BROAD RANGE OF RESIDENTS, INCLUDING ELDERLY, LOW-INCOME FAMILIES, PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV-AIDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS, AND HOUSING FOR LOW INCOME WAGE EARNERS.

THANK YOU MBCDC, AND AS YOUR MAYOR, ON BEHALF OF THIS COMMISSION AND THIS ADMINISTRATION, WE ARE PROUD TO HAVE PARTNERED WITH YOU FOR THE PAST 25 YEARS AND LOOK FORWARD TO MANY MORE.

LET'S RECOGNIZE THE CURRENT BOARD AND STAFF. NOW, THERE'S QUITE A LIST OF NAMES, BUT THIS IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE MOST OF THESE FOLKS JUST DON'T GET THEIR MOMENT IN THE SUN OR PUBLIC RECOGNITION.

PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE HERE.

ADA LLERANDI
DON TOMLIN
ROBERTO DATORRE
KARL KENNEDY
RICHARD WOOD
DENIS RUSS
MANUEL FOREO
IVETTE PINEDA
DANIEL ARJONA
JULIA MARTINEZ
MARIO RAMOS
LIANKA FONSECA
LARRY GREEN
PEDRO MAAL
JORGE RIVERA
LUISA LUJAN
ROGELY DIAZ
ZAILY NEH-PO-MOO-CENO

ARELYS RODRIGUEZ
LAURA MOLINA
HEATHER GRAY
RICARDO ANGEL
HUGO ARZAC
FLORENCIO GARCIA
GILBERTO DEJESUS SANIN
AND
MARTHA CACERES

IN CONCLUSION, I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE A MOMENT TO THANK OUR CLERK,
ROBERT PARCHER; VIDEO SPECIALISTS RON FRANCIS, THOMAS WHETZEL,
AND MANNY ESPINAL; AND CHIEF OF PROTOCOL MICHAEL ALLER. I WOULD
ALSO LIKE TO THANK FROM THE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR AND COMMISSION:
OFFICE MANAGER LUIS WONG; AIDES, SECRETARIES AND RECEPTIONISTS:
MARYILL NODA, SANDRA MEYER, ESTHER RODRIGUEZ, YVONNE SEPULVEDA,
HAROLD FOSTER, MARLENE TAYLOR, MARGARITA ALCON, MARIA LORENZO,
AND MY EXECUTIVE STAFF IN THE MAYOR'S OFFICE, AC WEINSTEIN, JOHN
HEFFERNAN AND FRANCIS FRANCES.

THANK YOU ALL FOR BEING HERE. GOD BLESS THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH,
THE STATE OF FLORIDA, THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND ALL OF THE
BRAVE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE U.S. MILITARY SERVING HERE AND ABROAD.